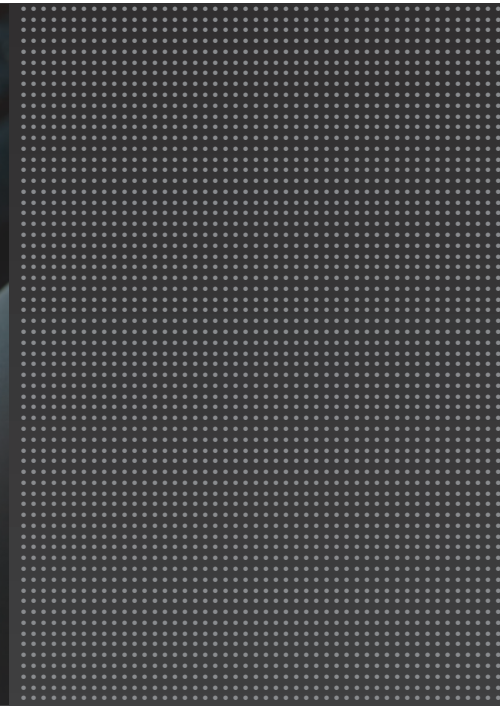


A R G E N T

Comparison Paper Argent for VMware vs. SCOM Management Pack Add-Ons



Contents

Overview	3
Critical Differences	4
Argent for VMware Competitor Analysis	4
Critical Architectural Differences	8
n-Tier Architecture	9
Critical Support Differences	10
Due Diligence – Customer References	11

Overview

This document compares and contrasts the monitoring, management, and automation capabilities of Argent for VMware with Microsoft SCOM's third-party packs from Bridgeways and Veeam.

It is testimony to the power and flexibility of VMware that Microsoft is forced, however reluctantly, to provide some form of monitoring -- Microsoft would undoubtedly prefer customers to use Microsoft's own Hyper-V product.

As this report illustrates, there are many significant differences between the Argent product and the third-party add-ons to SCOM – architectural differences, implementation differences, variations in pricing models, and in the way technical support is handled.

With offices in 30 countries around the world, Argent's products encompass data management services, full event correlation and analysis, regulatory compliance, inventory and asset management, performance management solutions, etc.

Argent's extensible product framework is designed to accommodate networks of all sizes via its patented, n-tier architecture. As a review in Windows & .NET Magazine stated:

“For once, the marketing rhetoric is true - the Argent Guardian scales to handle both the smallest and largest of networks.”

Differing Growth Strategies – Buy Versus Build

Perhaps the largest difference between Argent and Microsoft is how they have grown their respective enterprise monitoring businesses.

Microsoft prefers to employ a myriad of small vendors, all with different development standards and experience.

In contrast, enterprise monitoring has always been Argent's core focus since its inception 19 years ago.

During this time, Argent has made no acquisitions and has stuck with its agile product development philosophy based upon small teams located at the Argent development centers around the world. While Argent's painstaking approach is often more expensive and slower, it usually leads to better-integrated products.

Critical Differences

Argent not only provides a substantial depth of monitoring capability, but also an intuitive and consistent interface that has a minimal learning curve and does not require complex, proprietary scripting knowledge. In addition to the classic GUI, a complete Web 2.0 based interface is provided at no extra cost.

The following table contains a list of critical production-monitoring requirements, all of which are supported by Argent's monitoring products.

Argent for VMware Competitor Analysis

	Argent for VMware	BridgeWays	Veeam
License	Includes everything needed to monitor VMware	Product is sold as SCOM Management Pack Requires separate SCOM license and licenses for SQL Server	Product is sold as SCOM Management Pack Requires separate SCOM license and licenses for SQL Server
Business Visual	Argent SuperMaps provides a flexible way to display VMware components in a diagram or geographical map	None	Diagram only
Alerting	16 different Alert facilities	Limited and dependent on SCOM	Limited and dependent on SCOM
Action	Complete action mechanism including WMI/PowerShell/UNIX Shell action scripts for extensibility	Limited and dependent on SCOM	Limited and dependent on SCOM
Remote and Local Monitoring	Both agent-based and agent-less are provided; no difference in cost, customers can change at any time at no cost	Agent-less only	Agent-less only

	Argent for VMware	BridgeWays	Veeam
Scalability	Work-order based with superior reliability and scalability	Just a SCOM management pack - basically the same as running a simple WMI or PowerShell script	Just a SCOM management pack - basically the same as running a simple WMI or PowerShell script
Network Environment	Supports both LAN and WAN environments Only requires a TCP/IP connection to monitor remote sites	LAN only	LAN only
Enterprise Monitoring	Argent Non-Stop Monitoring and SQL Server Database Mirroring provides NO SINGLE POINT OF FAILURE Monitoring mechanism with FULL fault tolerance	No	Management Center with limited fault-tolerance
Extendibility	Management Script Rules leverage knowledge on VB/WMI/PowerShell/ Unix shell scripts, and extend the product limitlessly	No	No
Root Cause Analysis	Flexible Root Cause Analysis implementation	No	No
Database Backend	SQL Server, Oracle, and ODBC	SQL Server only	SQL Server only
Automatic VMware Discovery	Discover all VMware resources automatically integrated with CMDB-X for reports and sharing with other Argent products	No	No
Supported ESX Versions	Complete ESX 3.x and 4.x monitored using VI SDK Complete ESX 2.x monitored via ESX service console	ESX 3.x and 4.x only	ESX 3.x and 4.x Limited support of ESX 2.x through just vCenter/Virtual Center

	Argent for VMware	BridgeWays	Veeam
Complete Monitoring	Monitors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vCenter • Datacenter • Clusters • Resource pool • ESX host • VM • Datastore 	Unknown	Unknown
Hardware Monitoring	Yes	No	Yes
Performance Metrics	Provide easy Rules to monitor the most vital metrics, such as CPU/memory/storage Flexible and fully customizable performance rules selected from 300+ VMware metrics	Built-in VMware metric rules	Built-in VMware metric rules
SLA	Rules to check every level of SLA, from a simple ping, Windows API, SSH, through to network shares, and VMware connectivity	Limited to SCOM	Limited to SCOM
VMware Component State Monitoring	Monitor component states for each level of VMware components	No	No
VMware Version And Patch Monitoring	Detect out-of-date components	No	No
VMware Infrastructure Event Monitoring	Implements flexible event monitoring, which checks existence or non-existence of certain events	No	No
VMware Infrastructure Log Monitoring	Implements flexible log monitoring, which checks existence or non-existence of certain log entries Both vCenter and ESX log are supported	No	No

	Argent for VMware	BridgeWays	Veeam
Guest Monitoring	Complete VMware guest monitoring, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VM state • CPU • Memory • Disk • Datastore • Guest state • Guest metrics • All VM performance metrics 	Limited	Limited
Service Console	Built-in SSH mechanisms provide another unrestricted monitoring layer via the VMware service console	No	No
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built-in performance reports • Built-in performance charts • Customizable Crystal Reports • Custom reports interfacing VMware through PowerCLI and WMI 	Limited reporting	Limited reporting
Windows Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W200x performance rules • W200x service rules • W200x event log rules • W200x system commands 	None	None
Linux\UNIX Monitoring	Native Linux\UNIX script rules provide native monitoring for Linux/UNIX VMs	None	None

Critical Architectural Differences

The table below shows some big differences between Argent and SCOM. One key difference is SCOM lacks a motor pool. In contrast, Argent’s “motor pool” means a pool of servers are used to do the monitoring. The Argent design gives you complete load balancing.

	Argent for VMware	BridgeWays	Veeam
SuperConsole	Yes	No	No
n-tier Architecture	Yes	No	No
Clustered Architecture	Yes	No	No
Non-Stop Motors	Yes	No	No

As a review put it:

“Argent’s design and scalability features are impressive whether you have a small, three-system workgroup, a large multi-system domain, or a huge WAN spanning three sites and two coasts. The product uses one architecture, so it will grow with your network.” Windows & .NET Magazine

n-Tier Architecture

With Argent's n-tier architecture, customers can have all monitored servers in a single monitoring region, or, optionally, customers can divide monitored servers into different pools based on geography, function, etc.

Typically, for small environments (under 50 monitored servers), a single monitoring region will be appropriate.

However, take the case of a large Southwest utility that uses Argent to monitor over 1,200 production servers. Argent engineers worked with this company's technical staff to design a monitoring topology whereby monitoring was done by server function; each of the following has its own monitoring region:

- All the SQL Server production servers in one monitoring region

- All the SQL Server test servers in a different monitoring region

- All the Exchange 2010 servers in a different monitoring region

- All the IIS servers in a different monitoring region

- All the Power Gen production servers in a different monitoring region

Best of all, all outstanding Alerts from all these monitoring regions are displayed on one screen - Argent Super Console.

Other customers create independent monitoring regions based on geographic region, such as East, Central, West, South, Canada, etc.

Only Argent has n-tier architecture combined with the power of the Super Console.

Critical Support Differences

Argent does not farm out critical support to “partners,” some of whom may be very good while others can be very unreliable.

As Argent is much smaller than Microsoft, Argent can be more flexible – need an Argent engineer onsite on Monday?, simply call and it’s arranged – no tangled bureaucracy of partners, third-party pack vendors, etc, etc.

Argent is the only vendor that provides ‘round-the-clock technical support **AT NO ADDITIONAL COST**. At Argent, we know that most upgrades are performed on holidays and weekends, and this is exactly why Argent’s support engineers are always available.

Ask any Argent customer to compare Argent’s support with that of Microsoft.

Of course, if the issue or problem is in the third-party add-on, you’ll need contact them as well.

Argent offers its fabled Web Chat support service, which instantly connects you to an Argent engineer via an IRC session, saving your IT staff from being needlessly tied up on lengthy support phone calls.

	Argent for VMware	BridgeWays	Veeam
Live Support on Weekends	Yes	Unknown	Unknown
Instant Help	Yes	Unknown	Unknown
Free Installation	Yes	No, Extra Cost	No, Extra Cost
Free Training	Yes	No, Extra Cost	No, Extra Cost

Due Diligence – Customer References

When evaluating monitoring solutions, **one important criterion should be references**. You should request from each vendor the names of clients who have evaluated multiple monitoring solutions and find out why these clients selected one product over the competition. At Argent, we are delighted to provide customer testimonials from organizations of all sizes, across the spectrum of continents and areas of business.

Note: Product names and other trademarks referred to in this comparison paper are the property of their respective trademark holders. ArgSoft Intellectual Property Holdings Limited created this Comparison Paper for informational purposes only. ArgSoft makes no warranty, either express or implied, in this document. The information contained in this document is subject to change without notice. ArgSoft shall not be liable for any technical or editorial errors, or omissions contained in this document, nor for incidental, indirect or consequential damages resulting from the furnishing, performance, or use of the material contained in this document, or the document itself.